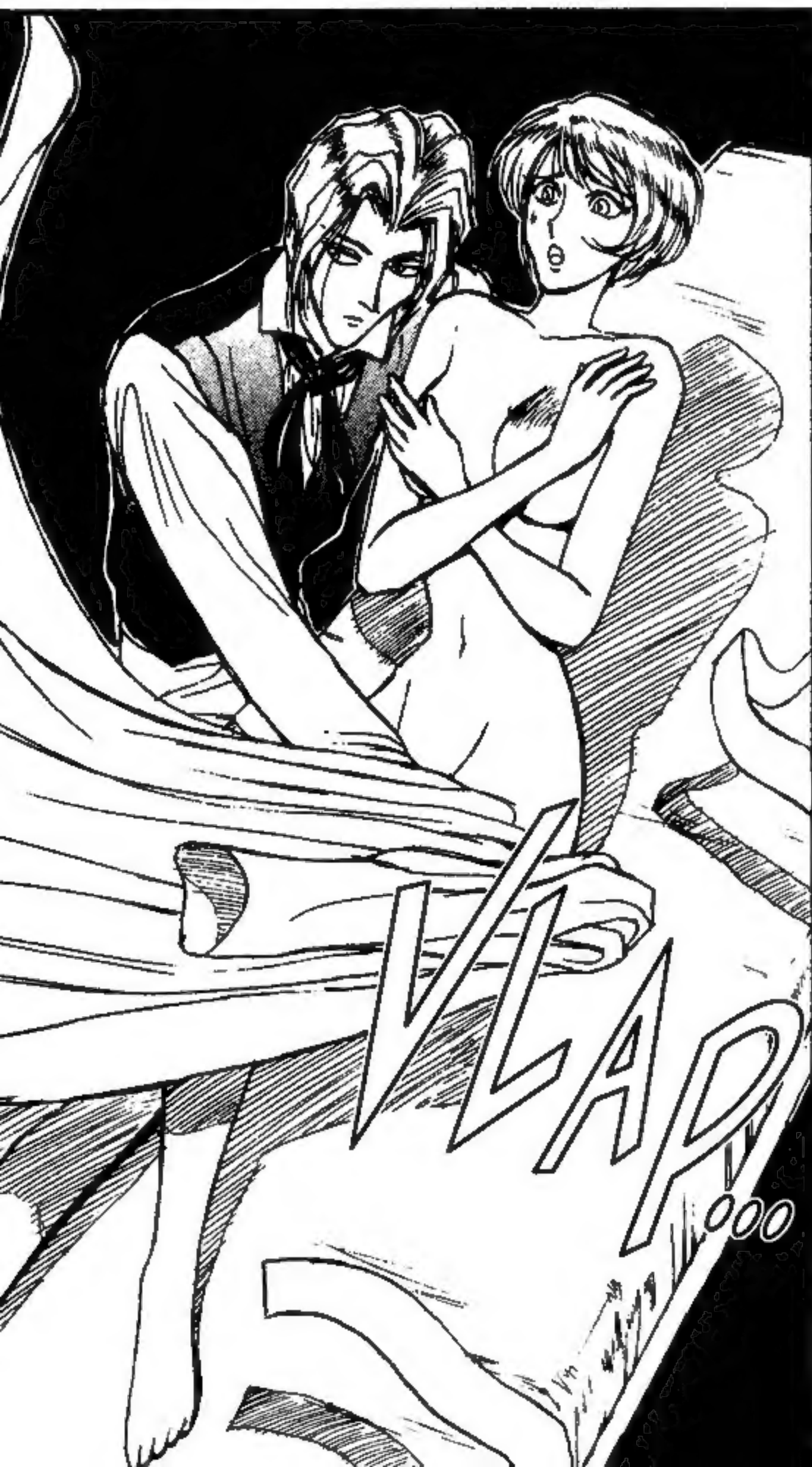




ACT IX :
KARAKURI *
THE PRINCESS OF
THE AUTOMATONS

"THE
DEBUTANTES
BALL"





SPAFF





THE FESTIVAL HAS ALREADY BEGUN, I THINK.

NARUMI ...



NARUMI HASN'T REACHED THAT STAGE YET.

WE **MUST** DESTROY THE AUTOMATONS! HUMAN LIFE IS NOTHING TO US.



Lohenstadt, The Capital



THE GUESTS WHO ARE GOING TO THE BALL ARE CUTTING OFF ALL TRAFFIC.

THEY SAY THAT PRINCESS ELISE ASKED THE PRINCE TO ORGANIZE THE DEBUTANTES BALL THAT WAS CANCELLED THE OTHER DAY.

WHY IS THE ROAD BLOCKED?

NO ONE ANNOUNCED THAT THE ROADS WOULD BE CLOSED!





COME ON,
LET ME IN!

BUT IF I LET
YOU GO JUST
BECAUSE YOU
TELL ME TO,

HOW MANY
PEOPLE WILL
I HAVE TO
ALLOW IN,
EH?



I TOLD
YOU, I CAME
BECAUSE I WAS
INVITED BY THE
PRINCESS!



MY
PASSPORT
IS...

MY NAME
IS NARUMI
KATO...



UH...

ARE YOU
DERANGED?

FINE, GIVE
ME YOUR
NAME AND
PASSPORT,
IF YOU
WILL?



ALL
IS WELL.
YOU CAN
ENTER.

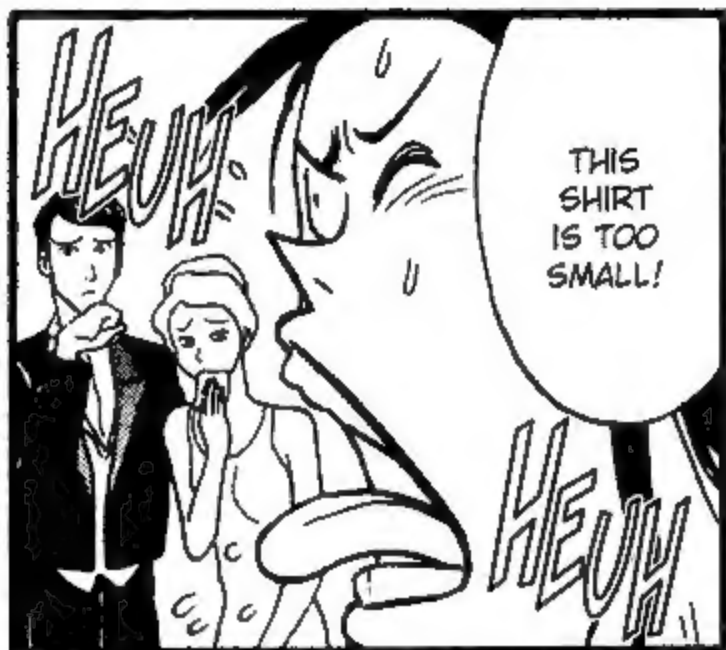
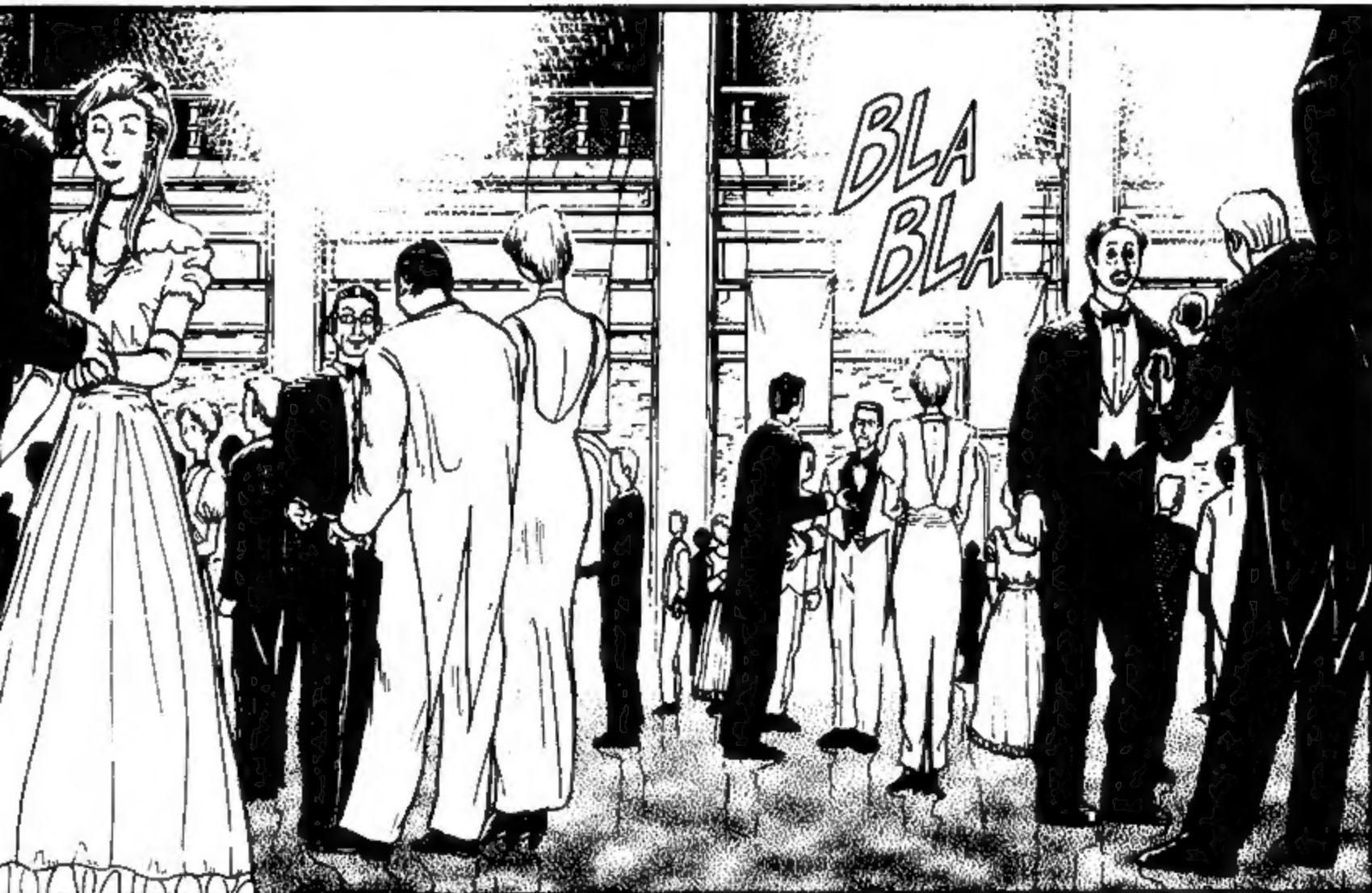
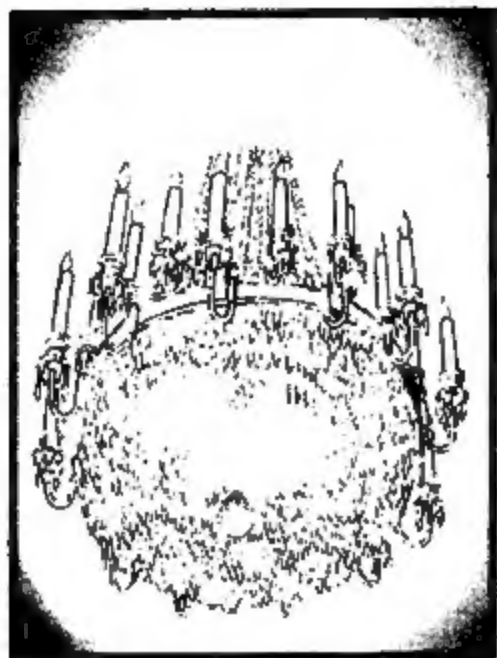
YES!
YOU HAVE
A GLOVE ON
YOUR LEFT
HAND TOO
...

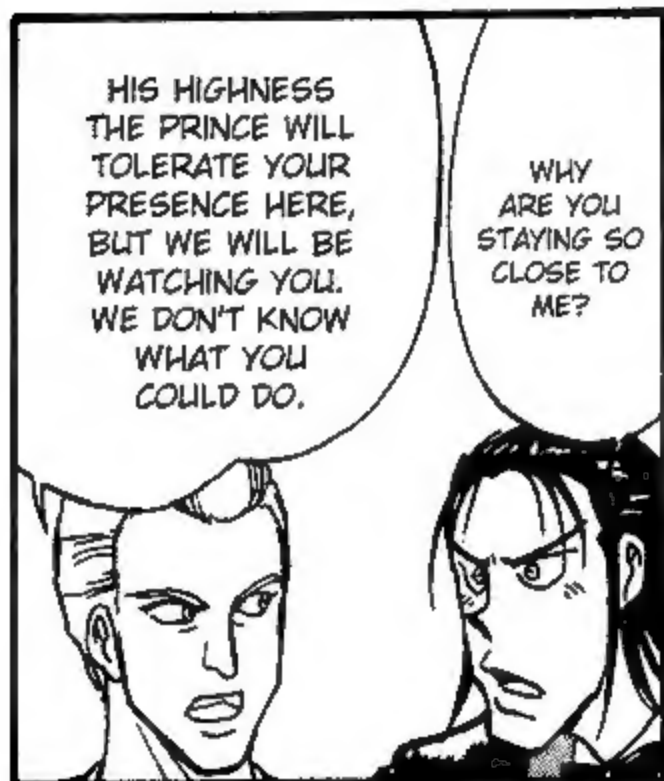


AH?!

NARUMI
KATO?! YOU
SHOULD HAVE
SAID THAT
EARLIER!





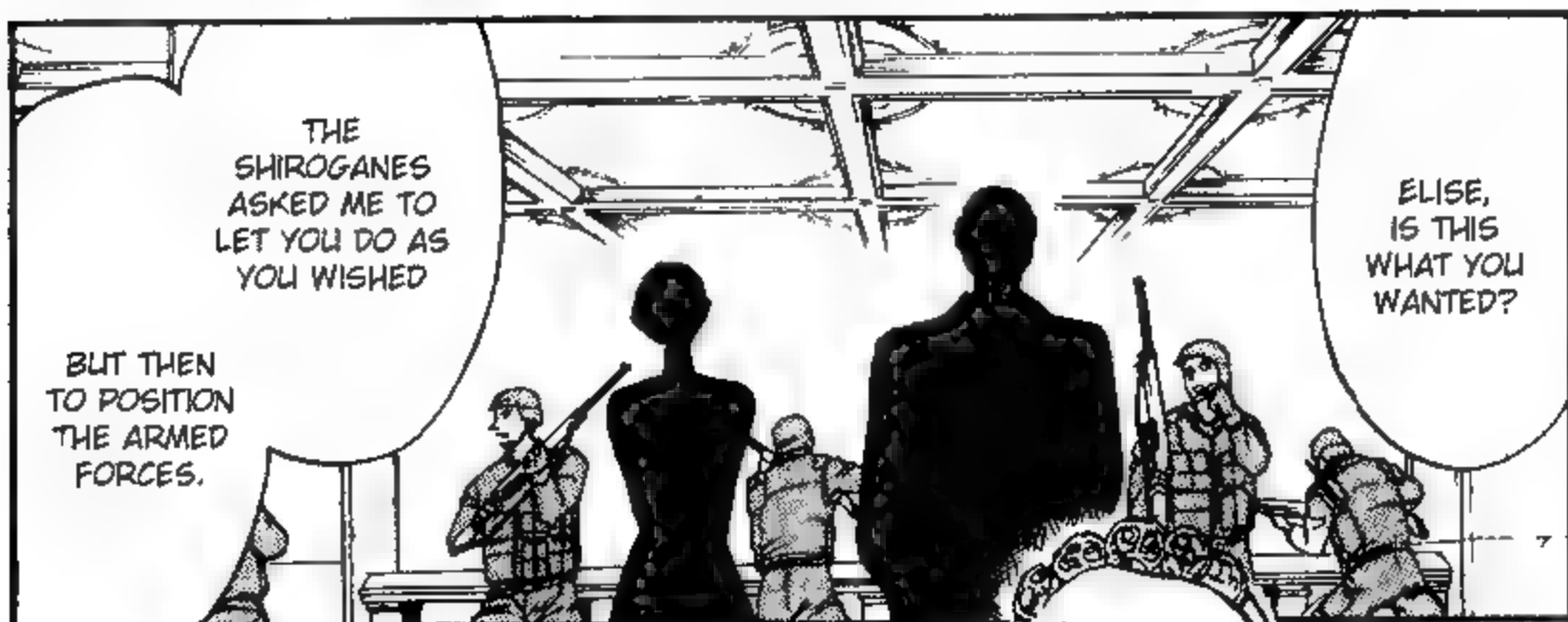




MAIN
ENTRANCE
GALLERY,
FOLLOW
THE PLAN.



SOUTH
GALLERY,
ON
STAND-BY,
ALL IS
WELL.



THE
SHIROGANES
ASKED ME TO
LET YOU DO AS
YOU WISHED

BUT THEN
TO POSITION
THE ARMED
FORCES.

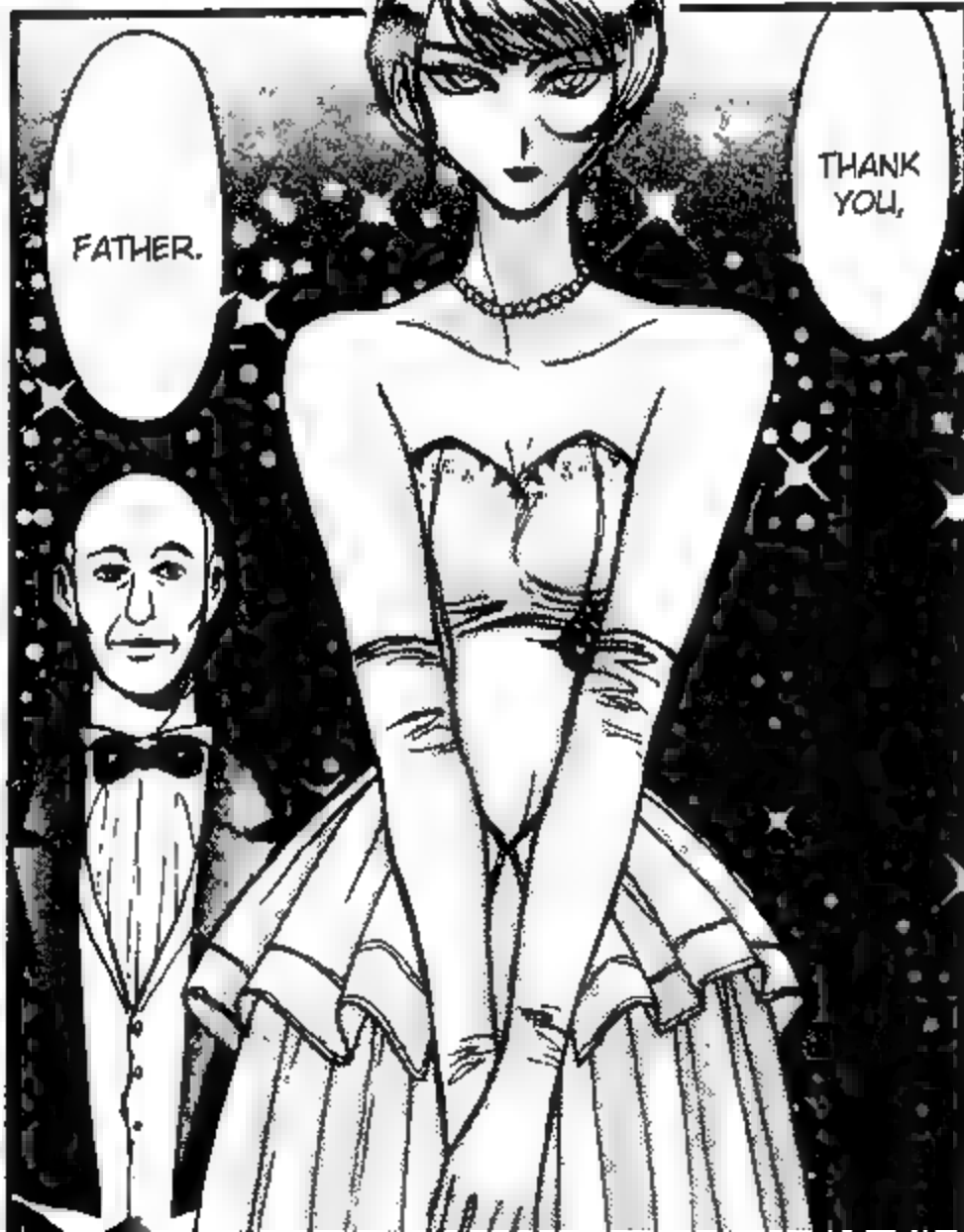
ELISE,
IS THIS
WHAT YOU
WANTED?



I AM
GRATEFUL
THAT YOU
ACCEPTED
MY
REQUEST.

IN FACT, I WAS
VERY SURPRISED
TO HEAR YOU ASK
ME TO ORGANIZE
THE DEBUTANTE
BALL UPON YOUR
RETURN.

IT WAS
NOTHING.

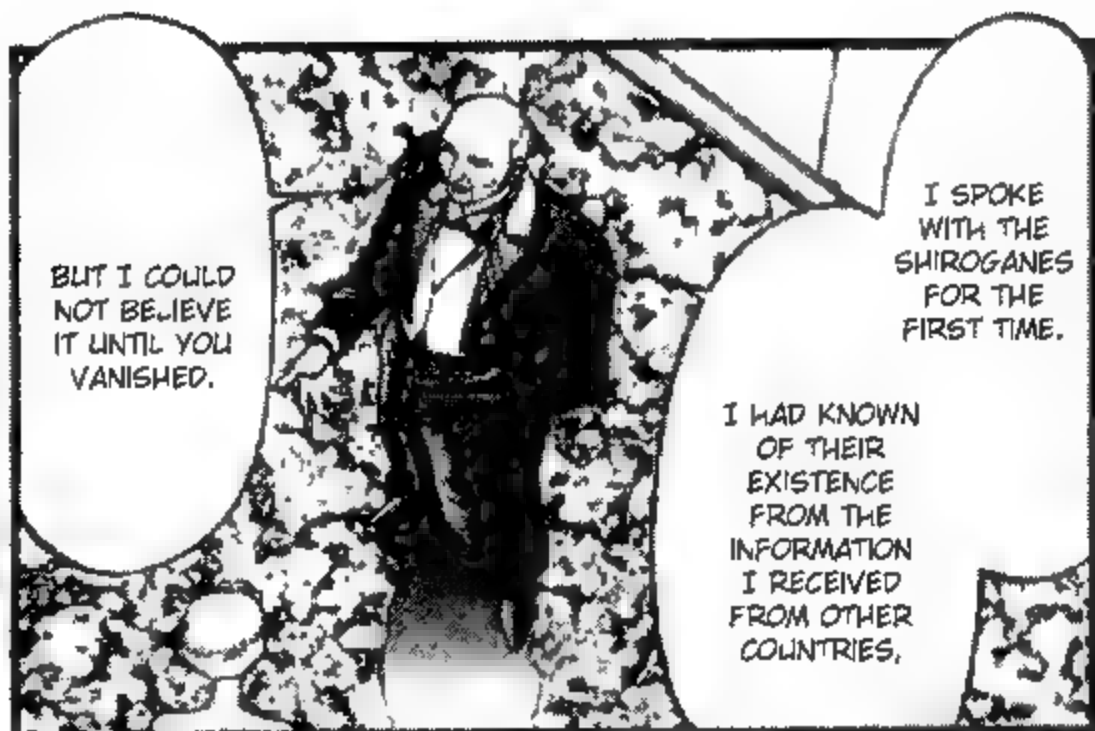


FATHER.

THANK
YOU,



PRINCESS,
IT IS TIME.



BUT I COULD
NOT BELIEVE
IT UNTIL YOU
VANISHED.

I SPOKE
WITH THE
SHIROGANES
FOR THE
FIRST TIME.

I HAD KNOWN
OF THEIR
EXISTENCE
FROM THE
INFORMATION
I RECEIVED
FROM OTHER
COUNTRIES.



YOU WILL
MAKE YOUR
DEBUT INTO
SOCIETY

AND THE
COUNTRY WILL
SEE THE BIRTH
OF A GRAND
LADY.



FATHER
...



I, AN
AUTOMATON?

WHOM
ARE THESE
GUARDS HERE
TO PROTECT?

WHAT'S
UP WITH
THE SHIRO-
GANES?



I CAN
NOW ACT
AS A HUMAN,
AND FURTHER,
AS A PRINCESS
OF A COUNTRY.

THIS IS IT.
I WILL BE
RECOGNIZED
TONIGHT.



TONIGHT,
I, APTCHA...



YOU
CREATED
ME, AND

MISTRESS
FRANCINE...

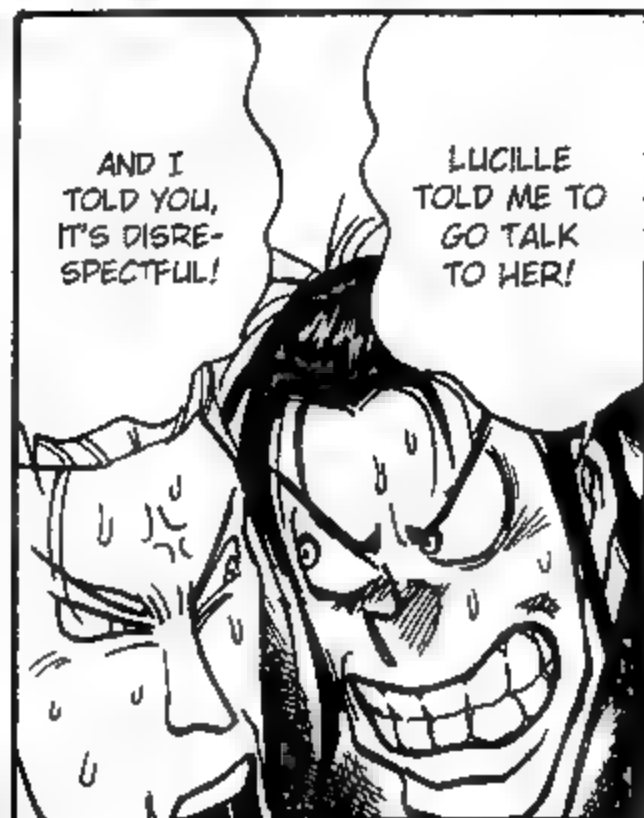
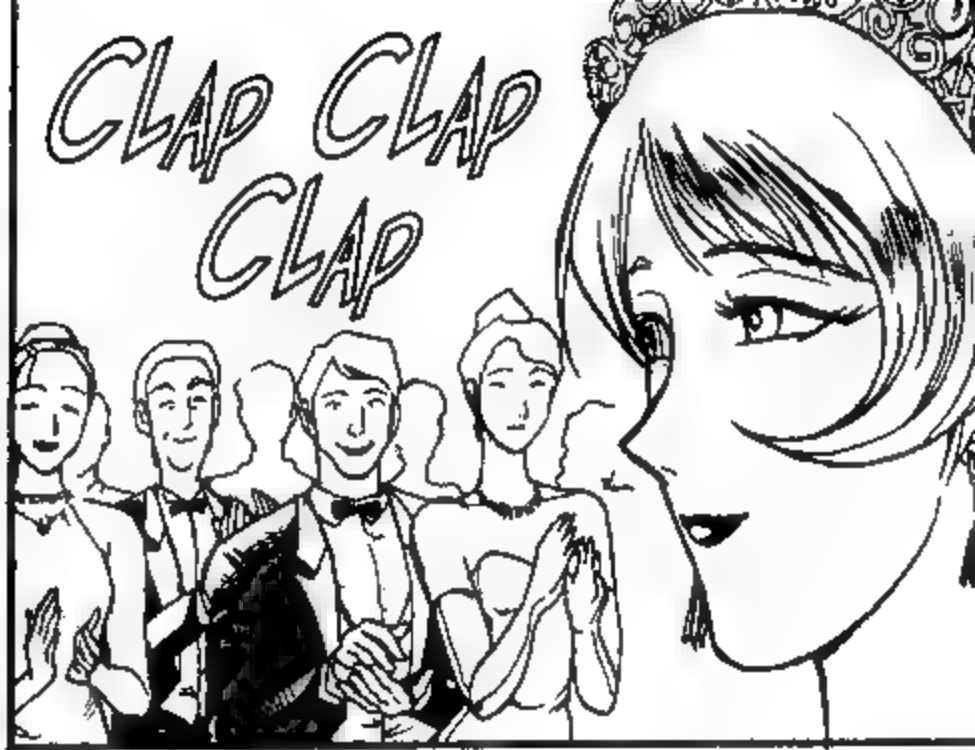


THE
HUMANS
WHO LEAD
THIS
WORLD!

WILL
DOMINATE



THE
PRINCESS
ELISE OF
LOHENSTEIN!







**TONIGHT,
I, AP'TCHA,
WILL WIN
EVERY-
THING!**

**MISTRESS
FRANCINE**

...



LOOK!

EVEN THE
SHIROGANE
EXPECTED TO
RECOGNIZE
AUTOMATONS
IMMEDIATELY
...

HE REALLY
THINKS I'M
ELISE!

FORGET
ABOUT IT!

YOU BECAME
VERY HAPPY
ALL OF A
SUDDEN!

AND
THE BURNT
MANNEQUINS?

IN TRUTH...

DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
IT.

OOPS!
I'M NO
GOOD AT
DANCING!

I WOULD
LIKE TO SEE
THEM ONE DAY...
WITH YOU!

BLACKOUT